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Holiday Crime Prevention reminders from Sheriff J. D. "Danny" Diggs

Indications and Warnings of Shoplifting

No list of behavioral traits can be inclusive; the following are obvious indicators that loss prevention experts and the York – Poquoson Sheriff's Office endorse:

Customer appears nervous or shy.

Shoppers who divert their eyes; face is pointed downward, but their eyes are looking up.

Shoppers dressed inappropriately for the season, especially bulky shirts or jackets.

Shoppers that seem to avoid sales people, or on the opposite extreme, shoppers who approach and speak to salespeople. This later approach helps them establish a social alibi in their minds.

Most customers will not avoid or actively engage salespeople.

Shoppers who kneel down to look at merchandise.

Customers carrying mall bags dispensed by the coin-operated racks in malls that appear empty.

Most shoppers purchase these bags when they begin to accumulate purchases, not before.

Shoppers carrying shopping bags from other stores, especially stores that are not in the same complex.

Customers initially in areas that would not normally be of interest to them; for instance, a male casually on the outskirts of the women's department. Sometimes, while assessing their surroundings, the shoplifters forget where they are.

Shoppers with strollers that seem excessive or have many cubby-holes or a large diaper bag.

Customers who carry merchandise from one area to another unrelated area.

Shoppers who gravitate towards and remain on the back sales floor walls.

Shoppers who consistently set their shopping bags down at their feet.

Shoppers who make small purchases and ask for larger-than-needed bags.

Shoppers who make quick selections, without regard to size or color.

**Prepared for by the York – Poquoson Sheriff's Office
Crime Prevention Unit**